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INFO RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ZAGREB 000281

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DEPARTMENT FOR IO, EUR/SCE, EUR/PGI AND EUR/PPD; NSC FOR
BRAUN; OSD FOR WINTERNITZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/26/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [HR](#) [KO](#) [UN](#)

SUBJECT: KOSOVO, IRAN AND COUNTERTERRORISM DOMINATE A/S
SILVERBERG'S CONSULTATIONS WITH CROATIANS ON UNSC ISSUES

Classified By: Chris Rhoton, POL/ECON, Reasons 1.4 B/D

11. SUMMARY: (U) Assistant Secretary for International Organizations Kristen Silverberg visited Croatia on March 17-18 to discuss United Nations Security Council issues. The A/S held working meetings with senior officials from the MFA and the Offices of the President and Prime Minister, as well as outreach events with students of Croatia's Diplomatic Academy and representatives from Croatia's opposition parties and academic community. The visit highlighted the strong cooperation thus far between the U.S. and the GoC on the UNSC, and Croatian officials expressed their commitment to work closely with the U.S. and EU to address the difficult issues facing the Council in the coming months. The GoC identified Kosovo and Iran as among the most pressing issues on the Council's agenda. Both countries also hope to re-energize the UN's Counterterrorism Committee, which Croatia currently leads. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) In a brief initial meeting, FM Goran Jandrokovic, told A/S Silverberg that the GoC was very satisfied with how its UNSC term was going so far. Croatia remains absolutely committed to coordinating its stances with the EU and the U.S. In the subsequent working sessions, Pjer Simunovic, Assistant Minister for International Organizations and Security Affairs, commented that Croatia's two months of UNSC experience had reassured him that "there is hope for multilateralism in the world" given the effective P-5 consensus on the majority of the issues facing the UNSC.

KOSOVO, B-H

13. (C) Regarding Kosovo, Simunovic stressed that any deterioration in the situation on the ground would be a disaster and would threaten regional stability. He added that Croatia recalled its own experiences with roadblocks, and attempts by local Serb populations to seek partition. The international community needs to "stand firm." The upcoming May 11 parliamentary elections in Serbia would be a referendum on the country's future, and Simunovic expressed the need for the international community to support the democratic forces seeking stronger ties to the West. Simunovic, citing his recent consultations in Moscow, also said he believed Belgrade had miscalculated Russia's long term interest in Kosovo, and that the Serbian people would ultimately be disappointed when Russia's support wanes in favor of other strategic goals.

14. (C) Simunovic also stressed that the GoC viewed Kosovo as a unique situation and rejected any attempts to use it as a

precedent for other independence movements, particularly in neighboring Bosnia-Herzegovina. In B-H, Simunovic said the GoC fully supported High Rep Lajcak. While Croatia was keenly aware of the need to accommodate all three constituent nations' political existence, "the imperative is to keep Bosnia-Herzegovina together." Davor Steir, foreign policy advisor to PM Sanader, stressed that B-H was another place that needed a firm position from the international community, particularly in regards to the actions of the Republika Srpska leadership.

IRAN AND THE IAEA

15. (C) Simunovic said the GoC very much appreciated the good cooperation among the EU3 and the P5 on Iran issues. He noted that recent sanctions against Iran had been adopted into Croatia's legal framework, and expressed support for keeping pressure on Iran to make its nuclear program fully transparent. Mario Horvatic, Croatia's representative on the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) Board of Governors, was, however, somewhat critical of recent developments in Vienna, and urged better coordination among "like-minded" governments. He explained that many "allies" of the U.S. were blind-sided by the recent technical briefing by Deputy Director General for Safeguards Heinonen. He said the GoC understood the need for some measure of secrecy in the run-up to the briefing, but that support for various proposals would be more likely if there were fewer surprises. In this instance, since there was no opportunity to prepare, the Croatian rep had ended up staying silent, which was "awkward." Another specific concern was to avoid any appearance the West is presenting Iran with a moving target. When Iran cooperates on one issue, "green salt" for example,

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a "new" issue like polonium is given primacy. He argued the Iranians were exploiting this perception to gain sympathy among IAEA board members, especially when some of the issues are not well understood by all IAEA members. Noting that securing support among IAEA members was in some ways more complicated than even at the UNSC, Horvatic felt it was critical, when possible, to collate available information and place all outstanding issues on the table at the same time. He also noted his wish that, from Croatia's perspective, coordination could be improved between the EU3 and the overall EU. He claimed that a recent EU-wide statement had been too distinct from the contemporaneous EU3 statement, with the EU Presidency's comments too "watered down." In a subsequent session, Tomislav Jakic, foreign policy advisor to President Mesic noted that the GoC places great importance on the role of the IAEA in maintaining pressure on Iran. Jakic noted that Mesic was willing to serve as a channel of communication to the Iranian regime, but was also not going to be "used" by Tehran as a tool to claim that Iran had good relations with the West. Ahemdi-Nejad regularly invited Mesic to visit Tehran, but Jakic said no such visit would occur until Iran met its international obligations and stopped threatening Israel.

COUNTERTERRORISM COMMITTEE, AFGHANISTAN, AND OTHER ISSUES

16. (C) Regarding the Counterterrorism Committee, which Croatia now chairs, A/S Silverberg urged Croatia to consider efforts to give the body a more active and relevant role, perhaps through streamlining reporting requirements or organizing visits to countries needing help and encouragement in meeting the reporting requirements. Simunovic said the GoC strongly supported re-energizing the CTC, and fully agreed with an effort to streamline reporting. But he also noted that such efforts would most likely bear fruit if they were not perceived as "intrusive". Croatia wants to pursue a "dual track" approach that would focus both on making "repressive" measure effective, but also addressing the root causes of terrorism and be a "helping hand" rather than a

burden to countries who cooperate with the committee. Another key issue would be to determine which countries could productively benefit from more CTC attention. Simunovic noted that they had seen some country visits that did not make much sense because there were no serious terrorism-related issues to discuss in the country visited.

¶17. (C) Discussion of CT issues led naturally to talk of Afghanistan and Iraq. The GoC views Afghanistan as the country's primary contribution to the international community. They saw little progress in Afghanistan as compared to Iraq, and expressed hope the UN would take a more visible role in the country. Simunovic noted that the GoC still had under consideration a proposal for Croatia to assume the leadership of a PRT. GoC representatives vowed the country would stand firm in its commitment to Afghanistan even if Croatian forces in the region suffered a casualty. Though non-specific, the GoC claimed to have a contingency plan for dealing with the likely public outcry under such circumstances.

¶18. (C) Rounding out the exchange, the GoC noted they would be contributing troops to the UN's peacekeeping efforts in the Golan Heights. The GoC also expressed support for UN efforts in both Burma and Sudan. On both issues, the GoC representatives were interested in the U.S. assessment of the role China would likely play in efforts to resolve both crises. Regarding Africa, Simunovic also solicited U.S. views for the ideas floated by South Africa on cooperation between the UN and regional organizations such as the African Union. Simunovic took A/S Silverberg's point regarding concerns that the proposal was not only about better coordination between the organizations, which the U.S. supports, but also about allowing the AU to tap into regular UN budget resources, which the U.S. opposes. Simunovic said he had heard similar concerns from the UK. He added that Croatia was still thinking about possible themes for its first session as UNSC president in December.

¶19. (U) A/S Silverberg has cleared this report.
Bradtke